

TITLE: CLIPBOARD AND READING STAND WITH LIGHT AND DRAWERS

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

Field of the Invention

This invention relates to apparatus facilitating reading and writing and, more particularly, to novel and highly effective apparatus that facilitates reading and writing while lying in bed, sitting, standing, walking, or traveling and under all conditions of ambient light.

Description of the Prior Art

Since their invention thousands of years ago, reading and writing have become two of the most basic skills of humans. A major focus of early education is to impart these skills to children, and the careers, travels, hobbies and recreation of nearly everyone depend on their mastery.

Because of the importance of reading and writing, many aids to their practice have been developed. While reading material is often held in the hand, it is more comfortable to place such material on a reading stand or similar support, leaving the hands free to hold a drink or a sandwich, to gesture (as when speaking publicly), or to underline passages of interest. Pens and pencils have been developed to enable writing, but a hard support for the paper or similar writing material is needed to enable the application of enough pressure to write fluidly without

puncturing the writing surface.

In order to be equipped for both comfortable reading and efficient writing, it has conventionally been necessary to have both a reading stand for supporting reading (or sometimes writing) material and a clipboard for supporting writing (or sometimes reading) material.

Even these two pieces of equipment are not enough when the ambient light is low. A flashlight can be carried to provide illumination under conditions of low ambient light, but this becomes a third piece of equipment to be carried, and it is awkward to read or, especially, to write while holding a flashlight. Also, pens, pencils, tablets of paper, erasers, paper clips, possibly a miniature stapler, and a book, a pamphlet or other reading material must be carried if one is to be fully equipped for reading and writing while lying in bed, sitting, standing, walking, or traveling. In conventional practice, all of these items must be assembled separately, and the amount of equipment to be assembled, carried and manipulated is excessive.

OBJECTS AND SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

An object of the invention is to remedy the problems of the prior art noted above. In particular, an object of the invention is to provide apparatus that facilitates both reading and writing while lying in bed, sitting, standing, walking or traveling, regardless of the ambient light.

The foregoing another objects are attained in accordance with the invention by providing apparatus comprising a base, a support connected to the base, and an adjuster for selectively collapsing the support relative to the base so that the apparatus can support writing (or reading) material and function as a clipboard; or extending the support relative to the base so that the apparatus can support reading (or writing) material and function as a reading stand.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE FIGURES OF THE DRAWING

A better understanding of the objects, features and advantages of the invention can be gained from a consideration of the following detailed description of the preferred embodiments thereof, in conjunction with the appended figures of the drawing, wherein:

Fig. 1A is a perspective view of apparatus constructed in accordance with the invention;

Fig. 1B is a view corresponding to Fig. 1A showing the apparatus in a second configuration;

Fig. 1C is a view corresponding to Fig. 1A showing the apparatus in a third configuration;

Fig. 2 is a top plan view corresponding to Fig. 1A;

Fig. 3 is a sectional view taken along the line 3-3 of Fig. 2 but showing the apparatus in another configuration;

Fig. 4 is a view taken along the line 4-4 of Fig. 2 showing an open paper compartment; and

Fig. 5 is a view taken along the line 5-5 of Fig. 2 showing the operation of a tab.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

Apparatus 10 constructed in accordance with the invention comprises a base 12, a support 14 connected to the base, and an adjuster 16 for selectively collapsing the support 14 relative to the base 12 so that the apparatus 10 can support writing (or reading) material 18 and function as a clipboard; or extending the support 14 relative to the base 12 so that the apparatus 10 can support reading (or writing) material 20 and function as a reading (or writing) stand.

Both the base 12 and the support 14 can have any shape, but preferably each is substantially rectangular in plan view.

The adjuster 16 comprises a hinge 22 for pivoting the support 14 relative to the base 12. The adjuster 16 further comprises a stay arm 24 extending between the base 12 and support 14 for holding the support 14 at a desired angle relative to the base 12.

The stay arm 24 is pivotally connected to one of the base 12 and support 14 at a fixed position such as the hinge 22 and to the other of the base 12 and support 14 at a position 28 that can be varied to adjust the angle of the support 14 relative to the base 12. In Fig. 3, the stay arm can be held by any of stops 29.

The apparatus 10 further comprises a device 30, preferably a spring-loaded clip, for securing the writing (or reading) material 18 (or 20).

A light 32 is provided for illuminating the writing material 18 or the reading material 20. The light 32 can be battery powered or connected to house current through an adapter and is mounted on a stalk 34 connected to the apparatus 10. The stalk 34 is pivotally mounted about an axis 36. The stalk 34 is telescoping by virtue of sliding telescoping joints T, and the light 32 is pivotally mounted on the stalk 34 about an axis 35. The light can also be swiveled (panned) left to right. The freedom of movement afforded by the pivoting of the stalk 34, the telescopic extension or retraction of the stalk 34, and the pivoting and swiveling of the light 32 makes it possible to position the light 32 to illuminate writing (or reading) material 18 when the apparatus 10 is used as a clipboard and reading (or writing) material 20 when the apparatus 10 is used as a reading stand.

The apparatus 10 also includes a page holder 38 for holding reading material open at a desired page. The page holder comprises a pair of spaced-apart spring-loaded tabs 40, 42 engageable with the reading material 20.

The apparatus 10 further includes at least one compartment and preferably a compartment 44 for holding at least a writing implement such as a pencil or ballpoint pen and a second compartment 46 for holding at least writing paper.

First and second lids 48, 50 respectively close the first and second compartments 44, 46, and first and second hinges 52, 54 respectively mount the first and second lids 48, 50 and enable opening of the first and second lids 48, 50 for access to the first and second compartments 44, 46.

Apparatus 10 constructed in accordance with the invention is therefore ideally suited as an aid to both reading and writing while lying in bed, sitting, standing, walking or traveling, regardless of the ambient light. Lecturers and other professional public speakers can use it to great advantage. A writing tablet can be kept in the compartment 46 together with clippings and notes for composing a talk or lecture. A ballpoint pen can be kept in the compartment 44. While traveling for a speaking engagement, and preparing a talk under conditions of low ambient light, the lecturer can use the light 32 to illuminate the notes, attach the writing tablet using the clip 30, and draft an outline of the speech. Notes for the speech can then be attached to the apparatus 10 using the clip 30, and the apparatus can be used as a clipboard while making the speech, the apparatus 10 being placed on a reading stand if one is provided. If no reading stand is provided, but there is simply a table, for example, the apparatus 10 can be deployed in its reading-stand configuration, and the notes for the presentation can be

attached using the page holder tabs 38, 40.

Many modifications of the preferred embodiment of the invention described above will readily occur to those skilled in the art upon consideration of this disclosure. For example, the number and the size of compartments for holding tablets, reading material, pens, pencils, erasers, etc., can be varied to suit particular needs. A lock can be provided to prevent access to the compartments 44, 46 by unauthorized persons. The light stalk 34 can be moved from the northwest corner of the apparatus (as viewed in Fig. 2) to the west side, the northeast corner, or the east side. In the first two positions it accommodates right-handed writers and in the second two positions it accommodates left-handed writers. The support 14 can be spring-biased to the deployed position in which the apparatus 10 functions as a reading stand, and a spring-loaded detent can be provided to hold the apparatus in the condition wherein the support 14 is collapsed relative to the base 12 and the apparatus 10 functions as a clipboard.

The invention thus includes all embodiments that fall within the scope of the appended claims.